

Massachusetts  
Community Adult Learning Centers and  
Adult Basic Education in Correctional Institutions

**Handbook**  
  
**for**  
  
**Student Achievement in Reading**  
  
**(STAR) Implementation**



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MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY  
**EDUCATION**

**Massachusetts Community Adult Learning Centers and Adult Basic Education in Correctional Institutions:**

**Handbook for Student Achievement in Reading: STAR Implementation**

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## The STAR Vision



The STAR (STudent Achievement in Reading) vision\* is to establish structures and practices at the classroom, program, and state levels to support evidence-based reading instruction for intermediate level readers (GLE 4.0-8.9/pre-ASE) that result in increased learner outcomes.

### STAR structures and practices include:

- ★ use of diagnostic assessments
- ★ student grouping according to instructional needs based on the results of the diagnostic assessments
- ★ explicit instruction that includes an organized STAR daily class routine
- ★ planning and delivery of evidence-based reading instructional strategies in [alphabetics](#), [fluency](#), [vocabulary](#), and [comprehension](#) that is responsive to student needs
- ★ monitoring outcomes and adjusting instruction as students' needs change

\* This vision statement is a slight modification of the STAR national vision statement.

## Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to guide Massachusetts ABE programs in implementing STAR's evidence-based reading instruction in their intermediate grade level equivalent (GLE 4-8.9) level classes.

**Note:** *If you wish to print a copy of the handbook, be sure to print the additional content made available through the use of hyperlinks throughout the document.*

The [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA) specifies that “the essential components of reading instruction” be incorporated into instruction. STAR is a nationally developed professional development reform initiative focused on building the reading skills of intermediate level adult learners (i.e., grade level equivalency (GLE) 4 to 8.9) in the essential components of reading instruction: [alphabetics](#), [fluency](#), [vocabulary](#), and [comprehension](#). At the national level, student outcome data shows that pre-ASE students make measurable gains in reading achievement when teachers implement STAR's structures and practices.

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) supports and promotes the STAR initiative because its instructional practices are grounded in peer review research. Since USDOE began the STAR pilot in 2006, twenty-one states have adopted this evidence-based reading instruction approach. Since Massachusetts began training programs in 2010, a total of forty-seven programs have participated with an additional twenty-six programs to be trained in FY2017.

Each year, Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) trains directors/coordinators and pre-ASE teachers from Community Adult Learning Centers and Correctional Institutions. As part of their training, each cohort participates in STAR Institute trainings, support meetings and webinars, and receives technical assistance from national STAR-certified trainers.

To participate in STAR, at least one pre-ASE teacher and the director/coordinator from each ABE program must commit to:

- ★ attendance at six full-day trainings (*STAR Institutes*);
- ★ attendance at STAR support meetings;
- ★ administration and use of the *Diagnostic Assessment of Reading* ([DAR](#));
- ★ implementation of [Evidence-Based Reading Instruction](#) (EBRI); and
- ★ adjustment of program design to meet STAR requirements (e.g., managed enrollment).

For a more extensive overview of STAR, see the [STAR Toolkit](#).

# Evidence-Based Reading Instruction and the College and Career Readiness Standards

Evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI) refers to instructional practices that have been proven by systematic, objective, valid, and peer-reviewed research to lead to predictable gains in reading achievement. As stated in the STAR Toolkit:

“With EBRI, teachers use diagnostic assessment procedures to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of each learner and target reading instruction accordingly. Teachers who use EBRI help learners improve their skills in each of the four components of reading - alphabetics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension - by explaining new concepts, modeling strategies, and providing feedback when learners practice.”

Although STAR and EBRI pre-date the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards, they support each other well. The national STAR initiative illustrate this connection by having readers “picture a road winding into the distance. At the end of the road are the CCR Standards, the destination or goal that students are trying to reach. At the beginning of the road is a diagnostic assessment, the starting point for the students, where they are now. A car travelling along the road is labeled EBRI showing that evidence-based reading instruction is the vehicle that moves students from where they are to reaching the standards.”

“But how does STAR address Reading Anchor 10 of the College and Career Readiness Standards (Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently)? Anchor 10 challenges students to read increasingly complex texts. Evidence-based reading instruction begins with diagnostic assessment to identify instructional levels, the level beyond mastery, where the text will be challenging (but not too frustrating) for the student. Once the student applies newly learned reading strategies to successfully read text at their instructional level, we bump them up to practice using the strategy with text at a higher level. Diagnostic assessment and continuous monitoring allow STAR implementers to select texts that are challenging and complex for each student.” (*STAR Tips and Techniques*, July 2016, vol. 7.)

## Student Testing and Assessment

Three discrete assessment processes are used in the STAR classroom:

- ★ **Initial Placement:** For placement of incoming students into the Intermediate, 200-Level STAR class (GLE 4-8.9), programs may use any appropriate published or program-developed assessment tool (except DAR or MAPT).
- ★ **Diagnostic Assessment:** For assessing the reading profile of each student assigned to the STAR class, programs must use the *Diagnostic Assessments of Reading Interpretive Profile (DAR) 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Diagnostic assessments in the essential components of reading (i.e., alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) are used to determine a learner’s patterns of strengths and needs in order to guide instruction.

- ★ **Pre- and Post-testing for Learner Gains:** To determine the learning gains of STAR students, Community Adult Learning Centers must pre- and post-test students with the *Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test (MAPT) for Reading*. Corrections Education must pre- and post-test students with the *TABE 9/10 Complete Battery Reading subtest*. Programs must select reading as STAR students' Primary Assessment Area.

## *Assessment for Initial Placement*

ABE programs administer placement tests to students in order to determine their appropriate class level. Students who score in the mid-range or pre-ASE level (GLE 4-8.9) are candidates for a STAR class.

**NOTE:** If a student was in an ABE class the previous year, his/her pre- and post-test assessment scores may also be used for placement.

Because STAR is designed for intermediate readers (GLE 4-8.9) only, accurate placement using an appropriate assessment is a critical first step in determining STAR eligibility. Having students in a STAR class whose GLEs are higher or lower than GLE 4-8.9 compromises the delivery and outcomes of evidence-based reading instruction.

**If a student is placed in an intermediate level reading class but is determined to be below or above GLE 4-8.9 (based on DAR assessment results), s/he should not be enrolled and reported as a STAR student. While accuracy in data reporting is always important, the stakes are higher for STAR because state level outcome data will be reviewed by researchers and key stakeholders at the state and national levels.**

## *Diagnostic Assessment*

Once initial placement is completed, programs administer the DAR (*Diagnostic Assessments of Reading Interpretive Profile*) 2<sup>nd</sup> edition for each pre-ASE student. The goal of this diagnostic assessment is to determine learners' specific strengths and needs in reading so that teachers can: (1) create a learner profile for each student, (2) select appropriate materials and evidence-based reading strategies, (3) group students by similar profiles, and (4) design appropriate instruction.

The DAR assesses students in the essential components of reading instruction<sup>1</sup>: [alphabetics](#), [fluency](#), [vocabulary](#), and [comprehension](#).

Programs must administer and score the DAR as instructed in the STAR training and the program director must ensure that DAR assessment results are kept on file for the duration of the grant.

**NOTE:** The STAR training will provide an in-depth overview of important steps for DAR administration of the fluency assessment and the comprehension interview.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more on the teaching the essential components of reading as required in WIOA, see this [WIOA Brief](#).

<sup>2</sup> For more detailed information on administering the DAR and creating reader profiles, consult your STAR trainer, the [STAR Toolkit](#), or notes from the STAR Institutes. When consulting the DAR Teacher's Manual, remember that for STAR, fluency and comprehension are assessed differently.

**The DAR must be administered by someone who has been trained in the STAR Institutes.** Every effort should be made to have the entire DAR assessment done by the pre-ASE teacher<sup>3</sup> so that s/he can:

- ★ design and differentiate instruction in light of observations made during the assessments
- ★ establish an initial rapport with students
- ★ learn about students' reading preferences (i.e., high interest genres and topics)

Teachers use the DAR assessment results to complete student groupings before instruction begins because the daily routine and instruction for the STAR class is based on the DAR results. (*Remember that a student who scores below or above GLE 4-8.9 based on the DAR should not be enrolled in the STAR class.*)

**NOTE:** The DAR is administered only once for initial group placement. It is not to be used as a formative or summative assessment to determine gains in reading comprehension or in any other essential reading components.<sup>4</sup>

### *Ordering DAR Materials*

The DAR is available through Riverside Publishers. To order, contact the Massachusetts sales representative, Lauren DeFrancesco at (317) 364-8432, or [lauren.defrancesco@hnhco.com](mailto:lauren.defrancesco@hnhco.com). Find order forms at <http://www.riversidepublishing.com/products/dar/pricing.html>.

### *Pre- and Post-Testing for Learner Gains*

Per [ACLS assessment policies](#) for MAPT and TABE 9/10, programs must pre- and post-test enrolled students each fiscal year in order to capture student educational gain.

STAR students enrolled in **community adult learning centers** must be pre-tested using the *MAPT for Reading* within two to four weeks of class placement and post-tested after 65 hours of instruction.

STAR students enrolled in **ABE programs in correctional institutions** must use the *TABE 9/10 Complete Battery Reading* subtest for pre- and post-testing. Pre-testing must occur after the day of intake, up to three weeks after enrollment. Post-test after 65 hours of instruction.

Learners may not be tested more than three times per year. Programs opting to pre- and post-test STAR students must pre and post-test in Reading and select reading as the *primary area of assessment*.

**NOTE:** Programs may use an existing reading score, including any score rolled over from the previous fiscal year, as the pre-test for students reported in STAR.

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<sup>3</sup> While the ABE program director may help with the assessment, the STAR teacher must administer the comprehension interview as it yields important information that guides instruction.

<sup>4</sup> For more information on determining when students are ready to move to the next reading level, consult the [STAR Toolkit](#) and notes from the STAR Institutes, or discuss with the program's assigned STAR trainer.

## Program Design

### *Budget Implications*

Programs should incorporate STAR class-related costs into their existing budget. Prep time for STAR classroom teachers should minimally be 1:1 or 2:1. Programs may use funds from their regular Community Adult Learning Center or Corrections grant to support additional hours for assessment, prep time, academic counseling, staff development, program development, substitute teachers for teachers attending relevant PD, instructional materials, and other STAR-related expenditures.

### Managed Enrollment

**STAR classes must use [managed enrollment](#).**<sup>5</sup> Managed enrollment, like intensity, is a key component of evidence-based reading instruction. When students enter the classroom randomly, it not only disrupts the flow of established groups, it requires teachers to frequently regroup students. STAR teachers and trainers have found that a leveled class where enrollment is managed provides the best environment for successful implementation of STAR.

Programs should follow these steps in managing the enrollment of a STAR class:

- ★ Administer a placement test to a group of new students to determine enrollment for pre-ASE (GLE 4-8.9).
- ★ Enroll students based on the available number of pre-ASE slots. **NOTE:** In order to reach a core group of 10 STAR students, it is recommended that programs over-enroll the pre-ASE class by 20%. If the number of students in the STAR class drops below six, the program should administer the DAR to a new group of pre-ASE students who will begin class on the same day.
- ★ Administer the DAR to all students in the pre-ASE class to determine eligibility for STAR.

There are a number of ways to implement managed enrollment. The schedule below provides one example.

Procedure	Dates	Notes
Pre-planning week for the STAR teacher	8/15 – 8/19	
DAR Testing/Orientation	Week prior to class start date 8/22 – 8/26	Test on M, T, W – Teacher Determines Groups on Th, F
12-week class session I	8/29 – 11/18	
DAR Testing/Orientation	11/21 – 11/25	Thanksgiving week – Assign students/Regroup
12-week class session II	11/28 – 3/2	Includes Holiday breaks
DAR Testing/Orientation	3/5 – 3/9	Assign students/Regroup
12-week class session III	3/12 – 6/8	Includes Spring Break week
Post-planning week	6/11 – 6/15	

<sup>5</sup> More information on managed enrollment and managed enrollment scenarios can be found in the *STAR Training binder, Institute I, Day 1, Handout 10*.



## Intensity

The [intensity](#) of instruction is an important variable in supporting student learning gains in the essential components of reading. During STAR Institute trainings and on-site visits, programs will receive guidance in maintaining optimal intensity for STAR students. Generally, more intensity is better than less, and research by STAR indicates that more frequent lessons are better than one longer session (e.g., one hour STAR classes occurring three days per week are more effective than a three hour class once weekly). Programs that provide less than nine hours per week of instruction for their pre-ASE class should devote at least 50% of class instruction on evidence-based reading instruction.

ACLS views pre-ASE classes of at least nine or more hours per week as best practice because teachers have the opportunity to utilize evidence-based reading instruction to a greater capacity and still have ample times to address other areas of instruction, such as math and writing. It is extremely difficult for teachers to successfully implement the College and Career Readiness Standards in conjunction with STAR in fewer hours.

## *Training New Staff*

Any teacher who will be teaching a pre-ASE (GLE 4-8.9) STAR class must participate in the entire six-day STAR training presented by nationally-certified STAR trainers. In order to ensure proper evidence-based reading instruction, staff involved in STAR must be trained only by the certified STAR trainers at the six full days of the Institute.

In the course of participation, a STAR program may experience the loss of its STAR trained instructor or director. In the instance of the loss of an instructor, that instructor's class will not be considered a STAR class until a fully trained STAR instructor is in place. **Having accurate data for when STAR is taught in class (and when it is not) is critical to our efforts to evaluate the positive impact of STAR. Therefore, programs must inform Merilee Freeman and the Program Specialist at once when a STAR teacher leaves the program.** See the Appendices for Contact Information.

## *Volunteers*

Volunteers are encouraged to assist in a STAR class under the direction and guidance of the STAR-trained teacher. Volunteers could work with a group of students on alphabetics, for example, while the teacher is working with another group on comprehension. Volunteers could also provide some students with additional support during a class activity. **Volunteers may not administer the DAR assessment.**

## Initial Monetary Support

Based on the availability of grant funds, in year one, ACLS provides \$1,800 to support STAR participation of the director and up to two teachers. Funds will be allocated through the continuation grant awards for 340/345 funds. These funds are to aid the program in putting structures and procedures in place that will support STAR in future years. **Note:** ACLS compensates for replacement of one teacher and one director (or coordinator) one time only (e.g., a teacher trained in FY16 left, and his/her replacement in FY17 was compensated for \$1,800.) A program that needs to replace additional directors/coordinators and teachers should use its existing budget (CALC or ABECI funds) for training new staff in STAR.

**STAR directors and teachers must attend STAR support meetings, webinars, and the STAR Summit as scheduled throughout the fiscal year.** To facilitate participation at these meetings and in support of the STAR teachers and classes, funding may also be used to support the following:

- ★ Increased assessment time for DAR administration
- ★ Increased preparation or common planning time for STAR teachers and relevant staff
- ★ Purchase of STAR-recommended reading materials
- ★ Purchase of DAR consumable test booklets
- ★ Travel expenses to meetings, lodging, and/or substitute teacher expenses
- ★ Other STAR-related expenditures

Programs are expected to sustain implementation of STAR over time by offering STAR classes taught by a STAR-trained teacher. Maintaining fidelity to the STAR model and to the STAR vision (on page three) is critical in preparing students to be college and career ready.

## Planning for Sustainability

ABE programs that are new to STAR will develop an *action plan* during each STAR Institute. In subsequent years, updates to that action plan should be included in the program's annual continuous improvement plan (CIP). Adding STAR-specific goals to the CIP builds sustainability and ensures fidelity to the STAR vision. For example, if a program's action plan included the goal that "The director will observe the STAR teacher twice per year," that goal would be incorporated into the CIP, under the larger program goal of *Improving Instructional Methods*, with specific dates for the observations and resources such as the STAR observation protocol. As with all improvement planning, the plan should be informed by data. See the section on Entering and Using Data for guidance.

In Years Two or Three, the program director should also develop a plan for sustaining STAR should the STAR teacher leave. Options and strategies for doing this will be discussed during the STAR Institutes.

## STAR Support

Because fidelity to the STAR vision is essential for student success, ACLS and STAR trainers provide technical assistance to programs as outlined below:

### *Timetable for Initial Support during Year One*

At Institute I and Before Institute II

- ★ Each program schedules and commits to a date and time for a conference call with an assigned STAR trainer. Both the teacher and director need to be present on the call. The purpose of the call is to check in with the STAR trainer **to ensure that DAR testing will be completed before Institute II** and to answer questions regarding the action plan and implementation.

- ★ No later than two weeks after the conference call, the assigned STAR trainer will submit a brief email to the teacher and director reiterating responses to questions and itemizing action points agreed upon in the call. The email is copied to the STAR project leads Merilee Freeman, Marie Narvaez, and the Program Specialist. Trainer contact information may be found in the appendix.

- ★ **Programs must bring their completed DAR assessment results to Institute II.**

#### After Institute III

- ★ Teachers develop class groupings based on their DAR assessment results. The initial grouping of the STAR students is completed during Day Six of the STAR Institute. (Grouping is the first step in ensuring that the strategies used with students are appropriately based on their specific reading needs.)
- ★ Teachers develop class routines based on the groupings and the instructional strategies to be used. Teachers focus on two to three reading components in their STAR class, not all four.
- ★ Teachers must teach these strategies using explicit and systematic instruction, meaning that teachers first explain why the strategy is important, then model the strategy, then facilitate guided practice, and finally, have students use the strategy on their own. (Explicit instruction is covered in the STAR Institutes; teachers may also contact their STAR trainer for assistance.)
- ★ The STAR trainer will contact the program director to schedule an observation visit, as described below. The PS will attend when possible. The purpose of the observation is to: (1) support the teacher in accurately identifying each student's needs and responding to those needs and (2) support the director/coordinator in overseeing the implementation of STAR at their program. (See [Before the Class Observation](#) for more information.)
- ★ During the observation visit or a follow-up meeting, the STAR trainer will review the program's *action plan* with the director and teacher.
- ★ Additional classroom observations or meetings may be scheduled based on need.

### *Classroom Observations*

All STAR programs will have one annual classroom observation by the STAR trainer. More may take place if requested by the program or trainer. However, **program directors must observe the STAR teacher at least twice per year on their own and submit their results to the STAR trainer.** Directors should use the STAR observation forms from the STAR Toolkit.

Observations are conducted to ensure fidelity to the STAR Vision (see page three of this Handbook) and evidence-based reading instruction. During an observation, the STAR trainer may provide the teacher and director with feedback on the degree of conformity with STAR implementation. Because classroom observations are intended to support the STAR teacher and the students in his/her class, program directors and teacher(s) will be asked to meet with the STAR trainer after the classroom observation for feedback and discussion.

## Before the Class Observation: Required Preparation

The following documentation must be emailed to the STAR trainer **at least two days prior to the scheduled observation** and copied to the STAR project leads, Merilee Freeman and Marie Narvaez. Relevant forms and guidance can be found in the STAR Toolkit. **Note: If the documentation is not received, the observation will be rescheduled, thereby delaying their receipt of valuable feedback that can affect student outcomes.** As a reminder, the STAR trainer will email the teacher one week prior to the scheduled visit and request the pieces of documentation below by a specified date, at least two days before the visit. The email will be copied to the program director and the PS. Documentation includes:

- ★ The *Class List of Instructional Levels and Notes from Diagnostic Reading Assessments* (i.e., DAR assessment results for all students)
- ★ Class groupings based upon the DAR results
- ★ *Daily STAR class routines*
- ★ Lesson plans for both the day before and the day of the observation

## After the Class Observation

- ★ Following the observation visit, the STAR trainer will provide feedback to the teacher and director, touching on the major points observed during the lesson.
- ★ No later than two weeks after each class observation, the STAR Trainer will submit a written report to the program via email and copy Merilee Freeman, the PS, and Marie Narvaez.
- ★ The written report will include recommendations for future lesson planning and use of the STAR strategies, with special attention to aligning instructional strategies with student needs based on DAR results.

**Note:** The STAR trainer may schedule follow-up observations to support the teacher in using STAR instructional components and strategies appropriately.

## Entering and Using Data

### *SMARTT Class Plan Information*

To ensure the accuracy of reporting at the state and national level, data for STAR classes in the SMARTT program plans must accurately reflect the hours of instruction spent only on STAR that is integrated into ELA instruction at the GLE 4-8.9 level. ACLS recommends that programs create separate ELA/STAR and math classes so the number of hours provided for instruction in each area is clear, rather than coding a class as Core instruction. For help in setting up the STAR class in SMARTT, contact your Program Specialist.

### *Accessing Data and Recording DAR Information in SMARTT*

At least quarterly, the program director and STAR teacher should meet to discuss and review data related to performance in the STAR class. Particular attention should focus on formal and informal assessments, attendance, classroom observations, class groupings, class routines, and learner gains.

For help in accessing data in Cognos, contact the [SABES PD Center for Using SMARTT and Cognos](#). STAR programs are no longer required to enter DAR data for students enrolled in STAR classes. However, **DAR data must be maintained in student record files for the duration of the grant.**

## Appendices

- ★ Glossary
- ★ Contact Information
- ★ DAR Administration Cheat Sheet for STAR
- ★ Planning Menu of STAR Instructional Strategies

## *Glossary*

**Alphabetics:** The set of skills and abilities that enable readers to turn letter combinations into spoken words. Alphabetics includes phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics or word analysis ability, and rapid word recognition.

**Comprehension:** The conscious activities readers undertake to construct meaning from texts, to remember details and ideas, and to make use of text for their own purposes.

**DAR:** The Diagnostic Assessments of Reading (DAR) is an individually administered set of tests to determine the appropriate level of instruction in the four components of reading: alphabetic, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. The DAR is not designed to be a placement tool and should not be used for this purpose.

**Diagnostic assessment:** The aim of diagnostic assessment is to determine the causes of persistent learning problems and to formulate a plan for remedial action. (Linn and Gronlund, *Measurement and Assessment in Teaching*, 1995, p. 15). For determining the causes of reading difficulties, Massachusetts ABE programs use the Diagnostic Assessments of Reading (DAR) Interpretive Profile, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.

**Evidence-based reading instruction:** instructional practices that have been proven by systematic, objective, valid, and peer-reviewed research to lead to predictable gains in reading achievement.

**Explicit instruction:** An instructional approach in which the “teacher presents content clearly and directly, providing step-by-step directions and modeling, followed by guided practice with feedback, independent practice, and frequent reviews. Similarly structured approaches are also called direct instruction, active teaching, or expository teaching.” (McShane, *Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults*, 2005, p. 155).

**Fluency:** the ability to read connected text accurately, at an adequate rate, and with appropriate expression.

**Intensity:** the number of hours of instruction per week in a given class. For example, a class that meets six hours per week is considered to have relatively low intensity; nine hours per week or above the class is considered relatively high intensity.

**Managed enrollment:** the practice by which students are enrolled in a given class at the beginning of the class term, remain in that class for the duration of the term, and no new students are enrolled in that class (either after a pre-determined date or not at all) for the duration (or a portion) of the class term. This contrasts with the policy of “Open Enrollment,” by which new students may be admitted into a given class at any time during the term.

**Vocabulary:** All the words for which an individual associates meanings. Vocabulary instruction should address the total number of word meanings known (breadth or vocabulary), the level of understanding of known words (depth of vocabulary), and how to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words (strategies).

## *Contact Information*

Please contact the Massachusetts SABES/PD STAR Coordinator, MA STAR trainers, and/or members of the ACLS STAR Group with questions or concerns.

### **Massachusetts STAR Coordinator:**

Merilee Freeman [mfreeman@qcc.mass.edu](mailto:mfreeman@qcc.mass.edu) (508-854-4296)

### **Massachusetts STAR Trainers:**

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### **ACLS STAR Group:**

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## *DAR Administration Cheat Sheet for STAR*

### **Alphabetics/Word Recognition**

- ★ Begin at the grade level the student received on the MAPT or TABE 9/10.
- ★ The Word Recognition Test directions are on page 14 of the DAR Response Record.
- ★ The Word Recognition lists of words are in the DAR Student Book Form A, pages 7-17.
- ★ Mastery is 7 out of 10 words correct; if achieved, student moves up to the next level. Keep going until student receives 4 or more incorrect. The previous level is the Mastery Level. Remember, the Mastery Level here will determine the starting point of subsequent assessment components.
- ★ For a score of level four or below, the Phonics assessments need to be administered. This may be found in the DAR on pages 4-13 of the Response Record (sections on Phonological Awareness and Letters and Sounds) and continued on pages 18-26 (Word Analysis) of the DAR Student Book Forms A and B.

### **Fluency/Oral Reading**

- ★ Begin the test at the Mastery Level for Word Recognition test.
- ★ Use the Fluency Scale from STAR, not the DAR instructions.
- ★ The Oral Readings begin on page 27 of Student Book A for levels 1-2 and on pages 30-37 of Student Book A for higher levels.
- ★ The mastery level for fluency is the highest grade level of difficulty on which a student is rated a “3.” The instructional level for rate and prosody is the highest grade level rated a “2.” The instructional level for accuracy (alphabetic in contexts) is the highest grade level rated a “1.”

### **Vocabulary/Word Meaning**

- ★ This test is called Word Meaning in the DAR. Directions are on p. 49 of the DAR Response Record.<sup>6</sup>
- ★ Begin at the Mastery Level of the Alphabetics/Word Recognition test.
- ★ The teacher reads: “What does \_\_\_\_\_ mean?”
- ★ Mastery is three out of four correct.
- ★ There are sample correct responses in the DAR Response Record.

### **Comprehension/Silent Reading**

- ★ Begin the test at the Mastery Level for Word Recognition test.
- ★ Directions are on page 34 of Response Record for levels 1-2 and page 36 for all other levels.
- ★ The readings and multiple choice questions are on pages 27-55 of the Student Book A.
- ★ After a student silently reads the passage, he/she will answer the multiple-choice questions.
- ★ After the multiple choice section, complete the Interview from the STAR Toolkit.

**NOTE:** If a student achieves mastery up to level 8, stop there and write that the student’s mastery level was 8+, which indicates that you didn’t administer any additional levels.

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<sup>6</sup> Additional directions are on page 25 of the *DAR Teacher’s Manual*. The test is on pages 50-54 of the *Response Record*.


## Planning Menu of STAR Instructional Strategies

ACTIVITY NAME	DESCRIPTION	HAVE USED BASED ON STUDENT NEED	WILL USE BASED ON STUDENT NEED	WITH WHOM / MY NOTES
<b>FLUENCY</b>				
<b>Collaborative Oral Reading</b>  ★ Good for accuracy, rate, and prosody ★ Less scaffolding	1. Done in small groups with teacher. 2. Each person reads three to five lines of text and then passes the turn to another group member, including the teacher. 3. Turns are short, so even less fluent readers can participate comfortably. 4. Keep group small so each student has numerous opportunities to practice fluency.			
<b>Repeated Reading</b>  ★ Good for lower level fluency-more scaffolding ★ good for accuracy	1. The student and teacher set goals. 2. The student performs an unpracticed reading with a short text at the target level. 3. The student hears a fluent reading of the text. 4. The student practices reading the text independently. 5. The student reads the text for the teacher.			
<b>Echo Reading</b>  ★ Good for accuracy, rate, and prosody ★ Best done one-on-one for struggling reader who needs much support	1. Teacher selects a text to be read aloud. 2. The teacher reads the first sentence aloud and the learner repeats - or echoes - the sentence. 3. Once teacher and student have read/echoed each sentence, the teacher reads the entire paragraph aloud again. 4. The student then echoes the entire paragraph to ensure he/she is not just parroting back what was heard.			
<b>Marked phrase boundaries</b>  ★ Used for rate and prosody	1. Teacher prepares a text by marking it to show students where words should be grouped together to form meaningful "chunks." 2. Teacher reads the marked text aloud while students follow along. 3. The teacher and students then practice reading the text together. 4. Students practice reading the marked text aloud on their own.			

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<b>Marked phrase boundaries, continued</b>  ★ Used for rate and prosody	5. Instruction progresses until learners can mark phrases themselves - first on texts they have practiced with, then on new material - and eventually read unmarked text with appropriate phrasing.			
<b>VOCABULARY</b>				
<b>Tier 2 Vocabulary Instruction</b>	1. Teacher introduces one meaning of each new Tier 2 word. 2. Teacher gives examples of contexts for the words, and then asks students for their own examples.			
<b>Fill-in-blank, Cloze, or Sentence Completion</b>	1. Teacher provides exercises where new Tier 2 words are used in different contexts. 2. May be done orally or on worksheets.			
<b>Read &amp; Respond</b>  ★ Answers may be written instead of oral	1. Teacher provides short articles on topics of general interest. 2. Teacher prepares questions about the articles that use the new words. 3. Learners will apply their knowledge of the word meanings when they respond to the questions.			
<b>Yes/No/Why</b>  ★ Answers may be written as well as oral	1. Teacher prepares questions in which new Tier 2 vocabulary words have been paired (e.g., “Is a <b>commotion</b> always <b>conspicuous</b> ?”) 2. The questions have no “right” answers, and the teacher shows students how to support their answers.			
<b>Quadrant Chart</b>	1. One chart is filled out for each new word. 2. May be done on board, newsprint, and/or blank handouts. 3. May be used as a follow-up, review, and/or homework activity. <div> <div>Vocabulary Word</div> <div>Meaning</div> <div>Examples</div> <div>Opposites</div> </div>			

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<b>ALPHABETICS (if needed)</b>				
<b>Affixes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher provides groups of words with similar prefixes or suffixes.</li> <li>2. Students and teacher practice determining what words mean, or how they change, based on application of the affixes.</li> </ol>			
<b>Base Words</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher provides groups of words with same base word root (e.g., interrupt, disrupt, bankrupt).</li> <li>2. Students and teacher practice determining what words mean, or how they change, based on their common base words or roots.</li> </ol>			
<b>COMPREHENSION</b>				
<b>Summarizing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Class reads text paragraph by paragraph; teacher asks for each paragraph, "What is the topic of this paragraph?"</li> <li>2. Teacher then asks, "What is the most important point the author makes about that topic?"</li> <li>3. Once important points are identified for each paragraph, teacher asks, "Is every point needed to understand the author's ideas?" Points that are unnecessary are eliminated.</li> <li>4. Class joins the remaining points to create a summary of the text.</li> <li>5. Students may practice summarizing in small groups or on own.</li> </ol>			
<b>Questioning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher begins by discussing the words people use to form questions (e.g., what, why, how). Then, shows them how to ask questions about a text (e.g., "Who saved Joe from drowning?")</li> <li>2. Teacher provides students with opportunities to practice questioning, in small groups and on their own.</li> <li>3. When both summarizing and questioning have been taught, teacher shows students how to combine the two strategies.</li> </ol>			

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<b>K-W-L Chart</b>  ★ Useful only if students are somewhat familiar with the subject of the text	<div>1. Teacher makes table on board or newsprint. Students make copy of their own on paper.</div> <table><tr><td>K I already <b>know</b></td><td>W I <b>want</b> to know</td><td>L I learned</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <div>2. Teacher presents topic or concept from a reading and asks the students what they already know about it, recording in <b>K</b> column.</div> <div>3. Teacher and students identify the <b>K</b> information that they think will be in the text.</div> <div>4. Teacher asks students what they want to know about the topic or concept, recording in <b>W</b> column.</div> <div>5. Students read the passage and what they learned is recorded in the <b>L</b> column.</div> <div>6. Class checks to see which column <b>W</b> questions are unanswered.</div>	K I already <b>know</b>	W I <b>want</b> to know	L I learned						
K I already <b>know</b>	W I <b>want</b> to know	L I learned								
<b>Text Marking</b>  ★ Useful only if students are somewhat familiar with the subject of the text ★ Very useful for learners who have a habit of reading word by word.	<div>1. Students use codes throughout a reading as follows: ✓ I knew this before. ! This was new to me. ? I'm not sure what this means.</div> <div>2. Teacher shows students how to mark a text, describing each of the codes.</div> <div>3. Class works together on a new text, discussing similarities and differences in the way each person would mark the text.</div> <div>4. Students work in pairs so that they can compare how they would mark a text with their partner.</div> <div>5. Students mark a text on their own.</div>									

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<b>Fix-Up Strategies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher asks students to quickly summarize what they just read.</li> <li>2. Teacher asks students to briefly retell what they just read.</li> <li>3. Teacher rates summary or retelling using rubrics from the Toolkit.</li> <li>4. A full list of other strategies “good readers” use is found in the <a href="#">STAR Toolkit</a>.</li> </ol>			
<b>Text Structures</b>   Can be taught to show the link between reading and writing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher explains that authors organize information in text.</li> <li>2. Teacher provides examples: some authors want to tell a story (involving a setting, characters, actions, and consequences), explain how things are alike or different (compare/contrast), list some characteristics or facts about a topic (description), show how something operates (sequence), or explain how or why something happened in history (cause/effect).</li> <li>3. Teacher provides graphic representations of these structures and then, as a group, class discusses how to fill some in (e.g., a folk tale for a narrative, two countries for a compare/contrast, climate change for cause/effect.)</li> <li>4. Teacher gives students examples of texts that fit these patterns, and class works together to identify the text structures.</li> <li>5. Students practice recognizing text structures, in small groups and on their own.</li> </ol>			